

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

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~~Claim 1 (currently amended): A symmetrical, hand-held trackball pointing device for interchangeable use by right handed and left handed users in either a right hand or a left hand of a user, comprising:~~

a) a symmetrical housing adapted and configured to fit interchangeably into a user's right or left hand proximate the metacarpal (i.e., first phalangeal) region of the fingers thereof, said housing being adapted for retention in said user's hand between said metacarpal regions and a palm thereof by no more than a thumb thereof, thereby freeing portions of said fingers beyond said metacarpal regions for tasks unrelated to said pointing device;

b) a trackball disposed in said housing and adapted and configured for interaction with the thumb of said hand of said user, and adapted for generating a trackball signal representative of a position thereof;

c) at least one switch disposed in said housing and adapted for manipulative interaction with said metacarpal region of a finger of said hand of said user, said at least one switch producing a switch signal representative of the state of said at least one switch;

d) circuitry disposed within said housing and operatively connected to said track ball element and said at least one switch and adapted to receive at least said trackball signal and said switch signal, and generate an output signal representative of at least one of said trackball signal and said switch signal; and

e) means for communicating operatively connected to said circuitry and adapted to communicate said output signal to an external device;

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C1 [ ~~f) wherein said housing comprises a symmetrical housing adapted for use in either the right or left hand of a user.~~

Claim 2 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 1, wherein at least one switch comprises three switches adapted and configured for switchable interaction with said metacarpal region of three adjacent fingers of said hand of said user.

Claim 3 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 2, wherein said three switches comprise momentary push button switches.

Claim 4 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 1, wherein said means for communicating comprises a hard-wired connection to said external device.

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cmt Claim 5 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 1, wherein said means for communicating comprises a wireless transmitter disposed in said housing and adapted for transmitting said output signal to a receiver operatively connected to said external device.

7 Claim 6 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 1, wherein said wireless transmitter comprises a radio frequency (RF) transmitter and said receiver comprises an RF receiver adapted for reception of said output signal transmitted by said transmitter.

6 Claim 7 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 5, wherein said wireless transmitter comprises an infrared transmitter and said receiver comprises an infrared receiver compatible therewith.

Claim 8 (original): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 1, wherein said housing comprises a pistol grip and said at least one switch is disposed proximate said pistol grip region.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 8, further comprising:

f) optional means for securing said hand-held pointing device to said hand of said user.

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Claim 10 (currently amended): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 9, wherein said optional means for securing said hand-help pointing device to said hand of said user comprises at least one elastic band.

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amended*  
Claim 11 (currently amended): The symmetrical, hand-held pointing device as recited in claim 9, wherein said optional means for securing said hand-help pointing device to said hand of said user comprises at least one strap comprising hook and loop fastening means.

[ Claim 12 (cancelled)

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